



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Museum of the Bible: Preserving and Interacting with God's Word

Guest(s): Steve Green

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: Welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. You know, the Bible is the most influential book in the world today. As a matter of fact, it's the most influential book in history. The study and preservation of this God-breathed text is central to our Christian faith. And on today's classic program here on Family Talk, we're going to hear more about the importance of the Bible from Steve Green.

Steve is the chairman of the Museum of the Bible, which is located in Washington, DC. Dr. Dobson will be talking with Steve about why he and his family pursued starting this museum and how the Bible really came to life for him during this process. And I should point out at the time of this program's original recording several years ago, Dr. Dobson was in Washington, D.C. for the museum's grand opening. Now let's join Dr. James Dobson and his guest Steve Green, right here on Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm here in Washington, D.C. with my wife Shirley, and we're here to help celebrate the pre-event preceding the grand opening of the Incredible Museum of the Bible. You cannot believe, in fact you have to see to believe what is taking place there at that site. I don't think there's been anything like it in the history of the world. Shirley and I got a walkthrough some months ago, and I'm telling you, it is an unbelievable structure in museum. It's eight stories high with 430,000 square feet of exhibits.

It displays thousands and thousands of manuscripts and artifacts that have been assembled from around the globe. The museum is located near the Capitol building and it is predicted to be one of the most visited of all of the things that you can see in Washington, D.C. And we believe there's going to be a stunning turnout of tourists who have come to see not only the Bible, but the educational facility that's been constructed here with us today is Steve Green. He and his wife Jackie and their family conceived this concept, and they've been working on it for more than a decade. I don't want to do any more talking. I don't want to take any more time. I want to hear directly from Steve and let me welcome him to our program.

Steve Green: Thank you, Jim. I appreciate you having me and look forward to being with you at our pre-opening events.

Dr. James Dobson: For those who don't know, Steve is president of Hobby Lobby, the world's largest privately owned arts and crafts retailer. Steve and Jackie are the parents of six children and they have four grandchildren. Steve, I'm sure you are absolutely thrilled with the way things have gone to this point. How do you feel about it?

Steve Green: It is very exciting. We have over the last few weeks been able to see different ones come through the museum. We had an open house, for example, for the construction workers on a Sunday, and we had probably a couple thousand workers and their families that came through. And it was thrilling to see the museum being enjoyed by families of all ages.

Dr. James Dobson: What thoughts are going through your mind as you look back on this decades long effort? Going back to the days when it was in the talking stage where you guys were just beginning to realize what you had the possibility of doing there in the nation's capital. What are you thinking these days?

Steve Green: Yeah, I remember early on it was just a dream, a thought when we really had no idea when we would open or where. We had no location. But as our collection was growing, we just knew that we needed to make this dream come alive. We really have a collection of 40 different organizations, entities, collectors, that have come together, and it has been a long journey. When you have a vision and a dream to celebrate a book that we were wanting to do, it is just thrilling to see people coming through and enjoying what you had been planning for years. And it's coming about. So we've had such great response and people that are just blown away when they come in. I remember some of those that we've been advocates for years. When they first heard about it, they thought a Bible museum, that's nice. But I think people are going to have to come and see we have really engaged some of the leading design firms around the country to help tell this book story. They've done a fabulous job.

Dr. James Dobson: Where did the germ of the idea first start?

Steve Green: It was really a group of guys that wanted to put a Bible museum in Dallas that asked if we would help them. And then a couple of years later, we started collecting. And as the collection grew, the family just felt the sense of responsibility that we needed to make sure that this dream became a reality. My brother has a Christian bookstore and had talked about a Bible museum throughout the years, but nothing ever happened. So it's not anything new to us, and there are many others that have had that dream, but as our collection grew, we just felt like we needed to be sure that the dream became a reality. So we started on that journey.

Dr. James Dobson: You have written a book about this journey and about the project called *This Dangerous Book*. In what way is the Bible Dangerous?

Steve Green: My wife and I who co-authored it with me, we just share some of our stories of how that this book has caused us to take journeys that we would not have anticipated taking. But if we believe in this book and we follow it, sometimes it will take you on journeys that you don't plan. There obviously are stories in history where people have died because of their love for this book. And our own journey with the Supreme Court where our business in essence was on the line for us to follow this book. So for us to follow this book can be dangerous, but I would also argue that for us to be ignorant of this book is dangerous because if it's what it claims to be, if it is God's guidelines for our lives, for us not to know that, we are going to be adrift and potentially go down paths that we weren't designed to go down. So to not know this book can be dangerous, to know this book can be dangerous.

Dr. James Dobson: Well God's Word is in itself dangerous because He doesn't speak casually. When He says something, it's got to be taken seriously. And that's what you hope will happen, isn't it?

Steve Green: Absolutely. We want to inspire people to engage with this book. We probably know it less than we ever have in this nation, and if we can inspire people to open this book and read it, get to know it for themselves, we think that it will have an impact on people's lives.

Dr. James Dobson: You mentioned a minute ago about the trips that you've taken, the journeys that it's taken you on. One of your initial trips was to Turkey in search of artifacts that you could purchase. How did that trip set you down the road to what you have eventually accomplished?

Steve Green: Yeah, the very first artifact that was mentioned to us was a manuscript that was in Turkey, and I had mentioned that we would be interested in potentially buying that for this group of guys' idea of a Bible museum. And so we made this trip to Turkey and had other appointments scheduled as well and started piquing our interest in the opportunities that were there. It also was at a time when the economy had struggled. Our first artifact was acquired in 2009, and so opportunities presented themselves, and we were able to collect items at a much faster rate than we had ever anticipated, and that's how our journey got started.

Dr. James Dobson: I saw in your book and in other things that I've seen written something called a Codex Climax...

Steve Green: Codex Climaci Rescriptus.

Dr. James Dobson: What in the world is that?

Steve Green: That's an artifact that during this time when the economy was struggling, one of the universities at Cambridge put up for sale. It was referred to as a rescriptus because it was rewritten on. The top text is a writing by a gentleman by the name of Klomakki. That's where it comes up with a codex, which means book Klomakki rescriptis. And it is the underlying text that we're most interested in because much of it is Scripture in an Aramaic language. And so that would've been the closest language to what Jesus would've spoken, and this may be four or 500 years after the life of Christ. And with new scanning technology, we're able to pull out that underlying text. Those scans are being done at Oxford and we're taking them back to scholars at Cambridge to do the translation work on it. So it's just an intriguing document that is even as we speak, is continuing to be researched and studied so that we can see some of the earliest Aramaic language. It's the largest portion of scripture known in this Aramaic language.

Dr. James Dobson: For those that come through, and I hope there will be millions in the first years, the exhibits are not just displays. This is an educational venture, isn't it?

Steve Green: These artifacts have an incredible story to be told. And so our job is to tell that story in as a creative, engaging way as we can. And we've done a lot of things. We even have some new technology that we have patented to help tell the story that the artifacts tell where the visitor will enjoy it. There is a digital docent, it's a kind of electronic device that you can carry with you that tracks you through the museum, and there's five levels of learning on there. So you can adjust the learning, whether it's a child or a scholar, to be engaging and learn about the items that we have, as well as a lot of electronics that make the experience fun.

Dr. James Dobson: Take it a step further and describe what people are going to see when they get there.

Steve Green: Well, when they first come in, there's two big bronze gates at the entrance that weigh 16 tons. It's the Gutenberg Bible chapter one, of Genesis. As they come in, the lobby has a digital screen that is one of the largest of its kind. And then there's three primary ways that we look at the Bible. Its history, its impact and its narrative. And there is a floor for each of those. And as an example on the impact floor, there is almost a Disney-esque ride, if you will, where we fly people through Washington, D.C. showing them where Scripture is engraved on monuments throughout the city. We don't have time to take them to all of the sites, but we take about 11 different sites and show them that. So it's a fun experience and at the same time they're learning that this book was influential in our founding of this nation and even today still has an impact.

Dr. James Dobson: When we came through, you were kind enough to show us through. There is something on the roof that fascinated me. You have plants from the Bible. Explain that.

Steve Green: We have a restaurant on the top floor that will be serving foods of the Bible. We sent our chefs over to Israel for about 10 days and they were learning about all

the spices there in Israel. There's a space outside that restaurant, which is a biblical garden space where there are plants, shrubs, trees of the Bible. So it's every area we have, we're trying to make sure that it's educational, that people are learning something and make it a great enjoyable experience for the visitor.

Dr. James Dobson: And speaking of that, you have things for children too, don't you?

Steve Green: We do. We have a children's space that we had the family that helped fund that came in and did a dedication, and that was the same day we had our open house for the construction workers. And after we had the dedication, it was open for them and we were on the second floor. I was looking down, I was pointing out to the family, I said, look at the crowd coming and going out of that space. It's going to be a fun space for the kids as well.

Dr. James Dobson: You talk in your book about the immense impact that the Bible has had on America. How did this book shape culture and history, especially ours?

Steve Green: Yeah. We have a section on our impact floor that just talks about the Bible's influence on America, and sometimes there's some challenging stories. For example, during the Civil War, there were those that would argue for slavery and from the Bible and those that argued against slavery from the Bible. So this book has been of an impact on our nation from our founding. If you were to look at the principles our nation was built on, many of those principles are founders found in the Bible. The example that I usually use is the idea that all men are created equal. There're two biblical concepts right there. The fact that we're created was a biblical concept and the fact that we're created equal, our founders got that from the Bible.

So many of the principles our nation was built on, our founders found in the Bible, and that's what we want to show there. There's arguments on what their own faith was, and that's not my argument. I don't know what their heart was and it could have changed over time. But what we can show is that they use this book as a guide in building the principles or nation was built on.

Dr. James Dobson: I've read that you said that this facility, this museum is not just for Christians to see, that there are displays and items of interest to people of all faiths and people with no faith.

Steve Green: Exactly. So we want this to be a safe place even for the atheist. So what we say is it's a non-sectarian look at the Bible. We're not espousing our faith. We're presenting the facts of this book, its history, its impact, and its narrative. What is this book's story? And we tell its story on the narrative floor and then its history. How did this book come together and what are the evidences for it? From the archeological evidence to the manuscript evidence and the effort to translate this book into every language of the world. So we look backwards on that floor and we're also looking forward. So it's just a place for anybody to come not feel

threatened and just be educated about a book. People can choose to believe what they want to, but we just say be educated about what you believe.

Dr. James Dobson: What's your favorite exhibit or artifact from the museum? Do you have one?

Steve Green: Yeah. I typically will mention the Flyboard ride going through D.C., and then the other one is right outside that called the Bible Now. And this is where we work with YouVersion, the most downloaded Bible app in history and one of the most downloaded apps in history. And one of the things that I like about that space, and there's a lot that's there, is we can show a world map that shows where people are downloading the Bible app right now or a second world map that shows people that are opening it, engaging with the Bible right now. So for the skeptic that comes in and thinks that nobody's reading this book anymore and it's a dusty book that doesn't need to be read, what we show is that there are people engaging with this book right now all over the world, unlike any other book. There is no close second. And so just to share that and show that I think is going to be impactful for people.

Dr. James Dobson: There is so much there. We could talk about it for a month or two. How has the project changed or affected you and your family? How have you been influenced by this?

Steve Green: Yeah, I've been a student of the Bible all my life. I remember in high school reading Josh McDowell's *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* that had just strengthened my faith. And I say this as we have, I have been able to be exposed to some of the leading scholars in the world, some very sharp people, and learn some of the intricacies of the Bible and how it has come together. It just has given me a greater appreciation for this book and caused me to realize how we have something very special sitting on our counter at home that we just take for granted. This book is an incredible book. The fact that 40 writers over 1400 years put this book together and it tells a story collectively. Imagine starting a book today and then not finishing until 1400 years from today. That's the story of this book. There is nothing that can compare to that.

Dr. James Dobson: And then there's perfect harmony throughout too. That's the amazing thing. If you had a trial and there was an automobile accident on a certain corner and you began interviewing the people who say they witnessed what took place there, they'd all have different account. They wouldn't agree with each other. And yet here you have this harmony throughout the Scriptures that occurred over a large period of time with different people writing in three different languages and describing the same basic idea. It could not have just happened.

Steve Green: And we kind of chide the children of Israel as they leave Egypt and God's providing them a pillar of fire by night and cloud by day. And you think, how could they not follow this God that's directing them every day? And yet, I would argue God has given us no less than that in His word. The more we understand how incredible it is that that book would come together, we have a miracle sitting right on our shelf.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you talked a couple of times there about the Word of God. Let me read a few Scriptures that I think were influential for you and they certainly have been for me. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is alive and active, sharper than any two edged sword. It penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit joints and moral. It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Boy that gets it said, doesn't it? This is not in the ordinary volume or book that God has given to us.

Steve Green: It's an incredible claim. Think about that. This book is claiming to be alive. How in the world could a book claim to be alive? There are some bold claims that this book makes and that's one of them. Imagine you writing a book and saying it was alive. You'd probably be laughed at and ridiculed, but this book makes that claim and it has survived. It's the most banned, burned, debated book, and yet it still survives.

Dr. James Dobson: 2 Timothy 3, 16:17 says, "All Scripture is God breathed." That's another unbelievable statement when you think about it. God Himself created the entire universe breathed these words. How dare we ignore them? And it goes on and is useful for teaching rebuking, correcting and training and righteousness so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. There are many cultures today who still don't have a written language. You think of the beauty of what was written in the oldest case more than 4,000 years ago. Isaiah 48 says, "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of God endures forever." I think that was written 2,700 years ago, if I'm not mistaken. And it's still alive today.

Steve Green: Yeah, and it's incredible to think that here's a book that makes that bold claim, and it also happens to have more manuscript evidence than all the major classical works combined. Is that just a coincidence, that it just happens to make that claim and happens to be the most documented manuscript? It just argues that the claims are true.

Dr. James Dobson: We're running out of time here. Let me ask you a question about families. We were speaking of kids a few minutes ago. Many of our listeners and the people who will eventually want to come to the Museum of the Bible, are young families that come on a budget, or at least I would expect that they would. And the question is, can they really afford such a trip to D.C. to see the museum? Is there a big cost to get in? What are you going to do to accommodate those families that don't have a lot of resources?

Steve Green: Well, we want to accommodate everybody. So our entrance fee is a suggested donation, and if a family doesn't have the resources, then they're welcome to come at no cost and enjoy the museum.

Dr. James Dobson: Steve, our prayers are with you. You and I prayed on the air before we really got started. There's been a lot of prayers so far that's gone into it, hasn't there?

Steve Green: There have been a lot of prayers. We have churches that have done prayer walking around the building that we weren't even aware of and we're grateful to everybody that has been praying. And we just know that God has been with us in this whole journey.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, my prayer now is that the Lord will bless every floor, every exhibit, every artifact, and that things will happen there that you have not even conceived in setting it up. And that the Lord would also bless it in the culture. There's so many things. We're out of time. Steve, I love you. I appreciate what you've done. I cannot believe with the size of the organization, your business that has to be run. You're the president of that. How you found time to do this, I don't know, but God obviously inspired you and helped you. Give my love and regards to your family.

Steve Green: Will do. Thank you.

Roger Marsh: Well, it's true that the Bible is the only book that is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. And when you read or study his word, God will speak to your heart and that's truly a wonderful gift indeed. Today on Family Talk, you've been listening to our special guest, Steve Green, along with our own Dr. James Dobson, discussing what awaits you at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. Now, to learn more about the museum or Steve Green and his ministry, simply visit our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And while you're there, be sure you also check out the broadcast entitled, "Etched in Stone." It's about the archeological findings that validate the accuracy of the Bible. As a parent, your primary aim is to pass along biblical lessons, the most valuable lessons in life to your children, especially when it comes to faith, finances, marriage, and parenting.

That's what Dr. Dobson and his wife surely have done with their own children, Danae and Ryan, and I know it's your heart's desire as a parent for your own kids as well. Here at the JDFI, we have a helpful tool for you to accomplish that goal. It's the *Parents' Answer Book* by Dr. James Dobson. This comprehensive, easy to access book provides biblically based information to parents to help them raise healthy, God-honoring kids. Topics like discipline, sibling rivalry, sex education, and spiritual development are just a few of the areas that are discussed in this extensive resource. We'll be happy to send you a copy as our way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute today. So to get yours simply visit drjamesdobson.org, then select the resources tab, click store, and search for the *Parents' Answer Book*. It's that easy. Well, thanks so much for listening today. I'm Roger Marsh. Hope you have a blessed weekend, and be sure to join us again Monday for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.